(c) if not, what other steps Government are taking to help film industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Of the two problems of the Indian film industry referred to by the Hon'ble Member, the high taxes generally refer to entertainment tax which is exclusively the concern of the State Governments. The Central Government had on its part written to the State Governments in the past to consider reduction of entertainment tax burden. As regards video piracy, the Parliament amended the Copyright Act, 1957 and Cinematograph Act, 1952 in 1984 to make the laws against video piracy more stringent. However, their implementation is the responsibility of the State Governments who have been requested several times to enforce the provisions of the amended Acts vigorously.

Grant of freedom fighters pensions to those who were in self-exile

3144. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered a demand of the Freedom fighters who were in self-exile in different States including the Union Territory of Pondicherry for the grant of pension;

(b) whether it is a fact that in some States including the Union Territory of Pondicherry, the Freedom fighters have been treated as criminals and the cases had been lodged against them; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Government are reviewing the policy of granting pension to the Freedom fighters; if so, what are its salient features?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) and (b) Under the existing provisions of the Scheme, a person who suffered imprisonment] abscondence] internment] externment for a minimum period of six months in connection with the freedom struggle is considered eligible for Samman Pension irrespective of the Section of the Penal Code under which he was charged.

The question of recognising the suffering of self-exile for this grant of Samman Pension under Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme has been considered by the Government but it has not been possible to accept the same.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration.

Constitution of a viewers panel for Doordarshan programmes

3145. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to constitute a viewers panel and a news panel to get continuous feed back on Doordarshan programmes and news also; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b) Doordarshan have already set up Viewers' and News Panels in 12 cities, namely: Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow, Srinagar, Jullandhar, Hyderabad, Nagpur, Cuttack, Jaipur and Rajkot. The reports from these panels for a specific week in a month are received and analysed. The findings of these panels are taken into consideration and modification in the programme formats are made, where necessary.

Grant of B-2 Status to Pondicherry

3146. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Pondicherry in the recent Assembly Session passed unanimously a resolution for the grant of B-2 status to Pondicherry;

(b) whether Government is aware of the fact that the population of the Union Territory of Pondicherry as per 1985 figures is above 6 lakhs;